

## Deuteronomy 33:2-29 - Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012

(2) And he said: "The LORD came from Sinai, And dawned on them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran, And He came with ten thousands of saints; From His right hand *Came* a fiery law for them. (3) Yes, He loves the people; All His saints *are* in Your hand; They sit down at Your feet; *Everyone* receives Your words.

- As we commence with the blessing that Moses pronounces upon the children of Israel, I want to draw your attention to a couple of things here.
- First, notice how it is that the "fiery" law from the right hand of God on Mt. Sinai with ten thousands of the heavenly host dawned upon them.
- It came to them, because of the love that God had for them. This law was God's way of saying that I love you so much, I want to protect you.

(4) Moses commanded a law for us, A heritage of the congregation of Jacob. (5) And He was King in Jeshurun, When the leaders of the people were gathered, All the tribes of Israel together.

- If this is a little reminiscent of the blessing that Jacob pronounced on the twelve tribes of Israel in Genesis 49, it's because it is like Genesis 49.
- I'm of the belief that Moses was the one who recorded Jacobs blessing upon Israel, which is why his blessing is so similar to that of Jacobs.
- It would stand to reason that this would be the blessing in harmony because both Moses and Jacob have been tuned by the same tuning fork.

(6) "Let Reuben live, and not die, *Nor* let his men be few."

- In order to understand the blessing on each tribe beginning with the tribe of Reuben who was the firstborn, it's important to see the prophetic.
- What I mean by that is, Jacobs blessing was really a prophecy concerning each of his twelve sons, and subsequently each of the twelve tribes.
- Having said that, what I'd like to do is reference Jacob's prophecy with Moses' blessing, so as to fully grasp their similarities and differences.

**Genesis 49:3-4** 3 "Reuben, you are my firstborn, My might and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power.4 Unstable as water, you shall not excel, Because you went up to your father's bed; Then you defiled it --He went up to my couch.

- This is in harmony with the blessing from Moses by virtue of how he says that even though Reuben was the firstborn son, he would lose it all.
- It's interesting to note that Jacob says he's "unstable as water" and will not excel because of his sexual sin when he committed fornication.
- His sin from forty years earlier when he committed fornication with Bilhah, Rachel's handmaiden, had finally come back to hunt and haunt him.

"Though he was the firstborn Reuben missed the birth-right, because he was light and loose. Whatever good points may be in a man, if he be not sober, steady and substantial, he will come to nothing. To be unstable as the waves of the sea is one of the worst of faults and mars the whole character."

Charles Spurgeon

- Water goes according to its own will, and its own way, and it won't stop until it goes down to the lowest level. Reuben did this figuratively.
- I suppose you could say that Reuben's sexual immorality cost him everything that he would have been entitled to as the firstborn son of Israel.
- This prophecy was fulfilled in that no prophet, judge, or king ever comes from the tribe of Reuben. They simply do not prosper nor do they excel.

(7) And this he said of Judah: "Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, And bring him to his people; Let his hands be sufficient for him, And may You be a help against his enemies."

- The next tribe that Moses pronounces a blessing upon is the tribe of Judah, and he does so by saying of Judah; "Hear, Lord the voice of Judah.
- This is where the name being the nature comes into play, and we once again have a fitting blessing with Jacob's fitting prophecy because of it.

**Genesis 49:8-12** 8 "Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you.9 Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him? 10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.11 Binding his donkey to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes.12 His eyes are darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk.

- Judah means praise and Jacob says he'll become the most prominent of all the tribes of Israel and is likened unto a lion's whelp meaning King.
- The reason for this is that from Judah will come the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords, when Shiloh, which means the Messiah, will come.

**Revelation 5:5** Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." NIV

- There is an interesting and even specific prophecy woven into the fabric of this blessing by Jacob to Judah and his tribe in the future.
- He says; "the scepter shall not depart from Judah ...until Shiloh comes. This is believed to have been fulfilled some 1,600 years later.

- Shiloh refers to Jesus and speaks of the Messiah. From David to the Herod's a prince of Judah was head over Israel.
- The prophecy was that Israel would keep this scepter until Shiloh comes. They would have self rule to exercise capital punishment.
- Under Herod and the Romans, their right to capital punishment, the scepter, was taken away and Israel thought this was unfulfilled.

Jon Courson of this says; "According to historian Josephus, 'The scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come' was the phrase that caused the rabbis to run through the streets of Jerusalem screaming in anguish in the year A.D. 12. That was the year that the Romans who were occupying the land of Israel – withdrew the ability of the Sanhedrin to mete out capital punishment. Having taught that the mark of a nation's sovereignty resided in its ability to execute capital punishment, when this power was taken from them, the Jews thought the scepter had indeed departed from Judah - that God had broken His promise to them. After all, Shiloh, Messiah, had not yet come."

- They knew the scepter was taken away, but Messiah hadn't come, or had he. Actually Jesus had come and was already in the temple.
- Some believe that this happened at the very time Jesus was in the temple at 12 years of age discussing the prophecy with the Jews.

**Luke 2:42-47** 42 When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. 43 After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. 44 Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. 45 When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. 46 After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. NIV

(8) And of Levi he said: "Let Your Thummim and Your Urim *be* with Your holy one, Whom You tested at Massah, And with whom You contended at the waters of Meribah, (9) Who says of his father and mother, 'I have not seen them'; Nor did he acknowledge his brothers, Or know his own children; For they have observed Your word And kept Your covenant. (10) They shall teach Jacob Your judgments, And Israel Your law. They shall put incense before You, And a whole burnt sacrifice on Your altar. (11) Bless his substance, LORD, And accept the work of his hands; Strike the loins of those who rise against him, And of those who hate him, that they rise not again."

- This blessing upon Levi is a little bit different in the sense that there's a twofold prophecy of sorts when it comes to Jacob in Genesis 49:5-7.

**Genesis 49:5-7** 5 "Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. 6 Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. 7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob And scatter them in Israel.

- Simeon and Levi are cursed as "instruments of cruelty" when they murdered all the men of Shechem in revenge for Dinah's rape.

- Reuben's sin was sexual immorality, and Simeon and Levi's sin was their cruel and fierce anger and wrath. Thus they were scattered.

- This prophecy was fulfilled with both the tribe of Simeon and the tribe of Levi in that they were both weakened and scattered as well.

- The tribe of Simeon will end up being the weakest of all the tribes numerically and actually share an allotment of land with Judah.

- What's interesting about this is that Simeon starts off as the third largest tribe but loses 63% numerically in the wilderness wandering.

- As for Levi, because of their faithfulness during the golden calf rebellion will actually become the priestly line in lieu of inheriting land.

"A great wrong was here disavowed by Jacob. He could not prevent it, for his sons acted hastily in self-will, and he knew nothing of their murderous deed till it was over, but he takes care to bear his witness against it in the most solemn manner. The follies of youth will come home to men in their ripper years. It is a great mercy when from our childhood we walk uprightly."

Charles Spurgeon

(12) Of Benjamin he said: "The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by Him, *Who* shelters him all the day long; And he shall dwell between His shoulders."

- While this blessing of Benjamin by Moses was fulfilled in the city of Jerusalem, Jacobs prophecy was fulfilled in a most interesting way.

**Genesis 49:27** "Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; In the morning he shall devour the prey, And at night he shall divide the spoil."

- What's so interesting this prophecy is that they're as a ravenous wolf that devours his prey. They lived up to this and fulfilled this as a tribe.

- They're reputation was one of fierceness with Ehud in Judges 3:15-23, Saul in 1 Samuel 9:1, 14:47-52 and Paul in Acts 8:1-3.

- Though this speaks of their fierceness, it also refers to their being victorious in the end with this the last of the 12 sons of Israel.

(13) And of Joseph he said: "Blessed of the LORD *is* his land, With the precious things of heaven, with the dew, And the deep lying beneath, (14) With the precious fruits of the sun, With the precious produce of the months, (15) With the best things of the ancient mountains, With the precious things of the everlasting hills, (16) With the precious things of the earth and its fullness, And the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush. Let *the blessing* come 'on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him *who was* separate from his brothers.' (17) His glory *is like* a firstborn bull, And his horns *like* the horns of the wild ox; Together with them He shall push the peoples To the ends of the earth; They *are* the ten thousands of Ephraim, And they *are* the thousands of Manasseh."

- We now come the Joseph, which includes his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh who are referred to as tribes in and of themselves.

**Genesis 49:22-26** 22 "Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a well; His branches run over the wall. 23 The archers have bitterly grieved him, Shot at him and hated him. 24 But his bow remained in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), 25 By the God of your father who will help you, And by the Almighty who will bless you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb. 26 The blessings of your father Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.

- Joseph's blessing is unique in the sense that it's an accounting of his life. Actually he was already blessed when his sons were blessed.

- It's as if Jacob is acknowledging Joseph's hard life early on, but that it will be very blessed later on, and indeed it was.

- Joseph's tribes were the most populous and were very blessed materially. In a way, his blessing exceeded that of even his ancestor's.

"The heart of the venerable patriarch was enlarged concerning Joseph; he evidently felt that he could not pour out a benediction copious enough. And truly, if we turn our thoughts to Jesus, the greater Joseph, no language can ever express our desires for his exaltation."

Charles Spurgeon

(18) And of Zebulun he said: "Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, And Issachar in your tents! (19) They shall call the peoples *to* the mountain; There they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness; For they shall partake *of* the abundance of the seas And *of* treasures hidden in the sand."

- Here, Moses blesses the tribe of Zebulun and the tribe of Issachar together, both of whom Jacob has very specific and fascinating prophecies.

**Genesis 49:13** "Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea; He shall become a haven for ships, And his border shall adjoin Sidon.  
- Jacob skips the birth order at this point and goes to Zebulun. He seems to be staying with the sons of Leah and going in that order.  
- Jacob says that they will dwell by the haven of the sea. They were given the land between the Mediterranean and Sea of Galilee.  
- This tribe becomes an "exiled people" in the sense that they were sort of set out, and scattered about, outside the border.

"May our seafaring people be favoured of the Lord, and never sit in darkness as Zebulun came to do."

Charles Spurgeon

**Genesis 49:14** "Issachar is a strong donkey, Lying down between two burdens; 15 He saw that rest was good, And that the land was pleasant; He bowed his shoulder to bear a burden, And became a band of slaves.

- Their prophecy is that they will be a strong donkey which was fulfilled in that they were the third largest tribe of the 12 tribes of Israel.
- Because of their size and abundance, they became targets of enemy armies who enslaved them fulfilling; "became a band of slaves."

"Though quiet and industrious, it may be Issachar was somewhat deficient in courage and energy. There are no perfect characters; but it were greatly to be wished that our contented brethren were also more energetic. Yet as Issachar was a true son of Jacob, we trust our slow-moving brethren are the same. It were well, however, for each of us to be more in earnest than ever, for we serve an earnest God."

Charles Spurgeon

(20) And of Gad he said: "Blessed *is* he who enlarges Gad; He dwells as a lion, And tears the arm and the crown of his head. (21) He provided the first *part* for himself, Because a lawgiver's portion was reserved there. He came *with* the heads of the people; He administered the justice of the LORD, And His judgments with Israel."

- The blessing concerning Gad has many details all of which are seen and fulfilled in and through Jacobs prophecy.

**Genesis 49:19** "Gad, a troop shall tramp upon him, But he shall triumph at last.

- Gad, meaning troops, did provide many troops during the time of David, but was oppressed by foreign armies in the time of Jeremiah.
- This speaks of the warfare that tribe of Gad was involved in during many of the wars and battles Israel had with her enemies.
- We would be grossly remiss to miss the part of this blessing and prophecy that declares; "he shall triumph at last." This is true for us!

"This is often exemplified in the believer's life. Many trials press him down, but he rises up again."

Charles Spurgeon

(22) And of Dan he said: "Dan *is* a lion's whelp; He shall leap from Bashan."

- With the blessing for the tribe of Dan, we have a "lion's whelp" mentioned again, however, it is very different as we see in Jacob's prophecy.

**Genesis 49:16-18** 16 "Dan shall judge his people As one of the tribes of Israel. 17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, A viper by the path, That bites the horse's heels So that its rider shall fall backward. 18 I have waited for your salvation, O LORD!

- From the tribe of Dan came one of Israel's most famous judges. His name was Samson, thus was this prophecy fulfilled.
- However, Dan was a problem tribe in that they introduced idol worship and later became the center of idol worship in Israel.
- It's believed the prophecy of them being a "serpent by the way" refers to the Anti-Christ coming from the tribe of Dan poisoning Israel.

- It's interesting that after pronouncing this on Dan, Jacob says; "I have waited for your salvation, O LORD!"
- Some think he's saying salvation will come to Israel after the poisoning deception of the Anti-Christ.
- Some think it means that he knows he will soon be in the presence of the Lord because of his long awaited salvation from the Lord.

"Here Jacob made a pause. His utterance of weakness has neither petulance nor complaining in it, but is expressive of hope growing out of long confidence. Soon he hoped to enjoy the fullness of salvation in the presence of the Lord."

Charles Spurgeon

(23) And of Naphtali he said: "O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, And full of the blessing of the LORD, Possess the west and the south."

- With Naphtali, we're given some geographical prophecies which we also see in Jacob's prophecy.

**Genesis 49:21** "Naphtali is a deer let loose; He uses beautiful words.

- Naphtali's land was near the Sea of Galilee where Jesus did much of His teaching. Interesting it says; "He uses beautiful words."
- As we'll see in a moment, this has prophetic significance for Israel in the last three and a half years of the seven year tribulation.

(24) And of Asher he said: "Asher *is* most blessed of sons; Let him be favored by his brothers, And let him dip his foot in oil. (25) Your sandals *shall be* iron and bronze; As your days, *so shall* your strength *be*.

- The last one is Asher, and needless to say, he is most blessed and prosperous.

**Genesis 49:20** "Bread from Asher shall be rich, And he shall yield royal dainties.

- Asher means happy. They were a prosperous tribe. Moses calls Asher a most blessed of sons and favored of brothers in Deut. 33:24.
- I suppose you could say that this speaks of how God will not only always protect and direct, but provide and guide His people as well.
- After we complete this chapter, which we'll do now, I would like to share with you how all of this fits together with all twelve tribes.

(26) "There *is* no one like the God of Jeshurun, *Who* rides the heavens to help you, And in His excellency on the clouds. (27) The eternal God *is your* refuge, And underneath *are* the everlasting arms; He will thrust out the enemy from before you, And will say, 'Destroy!' (28) Then Israel shall dwell in safety, The fountain of Jacob alone, In a land of grain and new wine; His heavens shall also drop dew. (29) Happy *are* you, O Israel! Who *is* like you, a people saved by the LORD, The shield of your help And the sword of your majesty! Your enemies shall submit to you, And you shall tread down their high places."

- What a grand and glorious end to this the second to the last chapter in the book of Deuteronomy, which is the last book in the Pentatuch.

- Essentially what God is saying is that this blessing is pronounced upon Israel for God's glory as His chosen people.

- Now, I think it's incumbent on us to look more closely at the prophetic nature of the blessings on Israel's sons.

- These 12 sons, like the seven churches in Revelation, are not just about them then, they are a prophecy for us, now, here's how:

- When Israel pronounces these blessings on his 12 sons, he is actually, by the Holy Spirit, speaking about Israel's future prophetically.

Adam Clark said it best when he wrote; "It is evident from this, and indeed from the whole complexion of these important prophecies, ... as they were to be fulfilled in the last days, i.e., in times remote from that period, and consequently to their posterity... The whole of these prophetic declarations, Genesis 49:2-27, is delivered in strongly figurative language, and in the poetic form, which, in every translation, should be preserved as nearly as possible, rendering the version line for line with the original."

NAME INTERPRETATION	PROPHETIC REVELATION	POSSIBLE SITUATION	HISTORIC APPLICATION
Reuben (See, a son)	Will not excel because of fornication "40" years earlier Genesis 35:22	We see the birth of Israel, but they commit spiritual Fornication and don't excel for 40 years in the desert Exodus 32:26-28	Abraham's Birth 1996 B.C. (Israel/Jacob the Grandson) The Exodus which was possibly about 1491 B.C.
Simeon (Hearing) Levi (Attached)	"...be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they hamstrung an ox....I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel."	They were hearers but not obedient doers of God's Word, because they are attached to the god's of this world. So they are divided and scattered all over the world.	Old Testament History and Prophecy concerning the children of Israel because of their worshipping other gods (1491 B.C. - 1 B.C.)
Judah (Praise)	"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes..." Geneses 49:10	The scepter of power was taken from Israel in 12AD when Jesus-Shiloh had come to the temple (Luke 2:40-52)	The First Coming of Jesus from the Lion of the Tribe of Judah (1 A.D. - 33 A.D.)
Zebulun (Dwelling)	"Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; ...his border shall be unto Zidon."	The Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, and Israel was scattered outside their borders losing Jerusalem in 70AD (Matthew 24)	Israel scattered and ceases to dwell in the land as a nation. (70 A.D. to 1948 A.D.)
Isaachar (Reward)	"Issachar is strong ...and their land was pleasant; ...and became a servant unto tribute."	Israel the land of milk and honey, made the Jews strong financially, and envied globally, they became slaves leading to the holocaust, then their rebirth as a nation.	Israel is rewarded with their land back after the holocaust, they win back Jerusalem, but let Muslims control the Temple Mount. (1967 A.D.)
Dan (Judge)	"Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path,"	Some think the Antichrist comes from the tribe of Dan (Dan. 11:37, Jer. 8:16) Dan is out of the listing of tribes regarding the 144,000 in Revelation 7:5-8.	Rapture of the Church, (Revelation 4-5) before the Tribulation, then the Anti-Christ can be Revealed (2 Thess. 2:3, Rev. 6-19)
Gad (Troops)	"Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last"	The Anti-Christ will bring troops to Megiddo	Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16-15-16)
Asher (Happy or Joy)	"Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties."	After the abomination of desolation, the Jews flee to a place prepared for them (Petra), to be fed and protected royally. (Dan. 9:27 Rev. 12:6-14)	Jews saved, and protected. (Revelation 6-19)
Naphtali (Wrestle)	"Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words."	The 144,000 will be let loose and will evangelize the world with the good news. (Revelation 14:1-3)	144,000 Jewish evangelists from the 12 tribes of Israel. (Revelation 6-19)
Joseph (May He add)	"...the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren."	Joseph a picture of Jesus is crowned with the everlasting, reunited with His brethren.	The Second Coming (Revelation 20)
Benjamin (Son, right hand)	"Benjamin shall be raven as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil."	Israel is a victorious remnant. Benjamin is the tribe that is given Jerusalem. Jesus is at the right hand of the Father, and will rule and reign forever.	The millennium, the loosing of Satan, (Revelation 20), then The New Jerusalem, the new heavens and the new earth, eternity future. (Revelation 21-22)